

## Directions, Contest Rules and Scoring

Ask students to read the maxims and look for one that inspires them. Explain what you mean by “inspire”—sparking a thought or bringing to mind a memory of an event or person who helped shape the student’s life or principles.

Point out that the contest provides the opportunity to improve writing skills and the possibility of winning a prize.

- All State-wide participants will receive a certificate of participation. (grades K-12)
- Each grade level first place winner will receive a gift certificate for \$50.00.
- Each grade level second place winner will receive a gift certificate for \$25.00.
- Each grade level third place winner will receive a \$15.00 gift certificate.
- The winner’s essays (grades 3-12) will then be submitted to the National CHARACTER COUNTS! <sup>sm</sup> *Foundations for Life* essay writing competition, whose deadline is March 17, 2006.

The winning essays in Arizona will be forwarded to the National CHARACTER COUNTS! contest. Through National CC!, one essay per grade from the top 10 percent will receive a National Scholarship Award (in the form of an interest-bearing U. S. Savings Bond).

- \$1,000 9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grades
- \$ 500 6<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grades
- \$ 200 3<sup>rd</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> grades

Student work will be judged (scored) on:

- Compelling Content (1-10 points)
  - Is the essay moving and thought provoking?
  - Does it directly relate to the chosen maxim?
  - Does it clearly relate to a core ethical value or a foundation of life?
  - Is it positive and life-affirming?
  - Does it have universal appeal?
  - Does it demonstrate that living up to the chosen ethical value would potentially make the world a better place?
  - Does it offer a compelling insight into the essay’s author?
- Presentation (1-5 points)
  - Is it written clearly so that grammar and spelling do not impede the message?
  - Is it easy to read?
  - Does it clearly convey what the author intended to share?
  - Does it have ideas and paragraphs that flow smoothly?

**We are asking each participating school to submit one essay per grade level.**

- Each submission must have an entry form stapled to the front of the essay.

- Essays will be read and judged by a character-oriented committee at the Department of Education.

**Submissions must be postmarked no later than February 10, 2006.**

Please mail your entries to:

Character Education and Development  
1535 West Jefferson Street Bin #18  
Phoenix, AZ 85007